

**Every 8 Seconds...
Someone Calls a Poison Center.**

What is a poisoning?

A poison exposure occurs when a person swallows, breathes, touches, or gets splashed in the eye with something that can cause sickness or death. Poisoning is a matter of dose—too much of anything can be dangerous. Products such as pain medicines and household cleaning products are common causes of poison exposures in the United States. Most consumer products are safe if label directions are followed, but some can be poisonous if used incorrectly.

Who gets poisoned?

In 2007, 2.5 million people were exposed to poisons. Almost 1.3 million of these occurred in children 5 years or younger. In the same year, almost 860,000 adults (20 years and older) called Poison Centers.

How do people get poisoned?

Most poisoning exposures are unintentional. About 13 percent are on purpose, due either to a suicide attempt or intentional misuse.

What are the leading causes of poisoning for children and adults?

Children

- Cosmetics such as perfume or nail polish, and personal care products such as deodorant and soap.

- Cleaning products such as laundry detergent and floor cleaners.
- Pain killers such as acetaminophen and similar medications.

Adults

- Pain killers,
- Sedatives (drugs used to reduce anxiety), hypnotics (sleeping pills) and antipsychotics (drugs used to treat mental illness), and
- Household cleaning products.

Where do people get poisoned?

Approximately 90 percent of poisonings occur in the home.

Where can people get help for poisonings?

Poison Centers can be reached at 1-800-222-1222. Dialing this number will connect you to your local Poison Center. Poison Centers are staffed by nurses, pharmacists and physicians. Here you can get help with poisoning emergencies and obtain information on ways to keep your family safe. Poison Centers are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Service is available throughout the entire United States and many territories. The call is free and confidential.

Why call a Poison Center?

Almost 90 percent of the public who call a local Poison Center get the help they need over the telephone without having to go to a doctor or the hospital.

For more information call your Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 or visit www.PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov and www.aapcc.org.



**American Association of
Poison Control Centers**

